



1995 Trade Union Statistics Australia

Product No. 6323.0.40.001



Statistics ■

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NOTE: A commentary on the main findings of the 1995 Trade Unions collection, and a set of core tables was published in the November 1995 issue of *Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0)

Trade Union Statistics, Australia, 1995

Main features

Based on the results of the recently conducted Trade Union Census, at 30 June 1995 there were 142 trade unions in Australia. Total membership was 2,756,300 of which 2,439,700 were reported as current financial members.

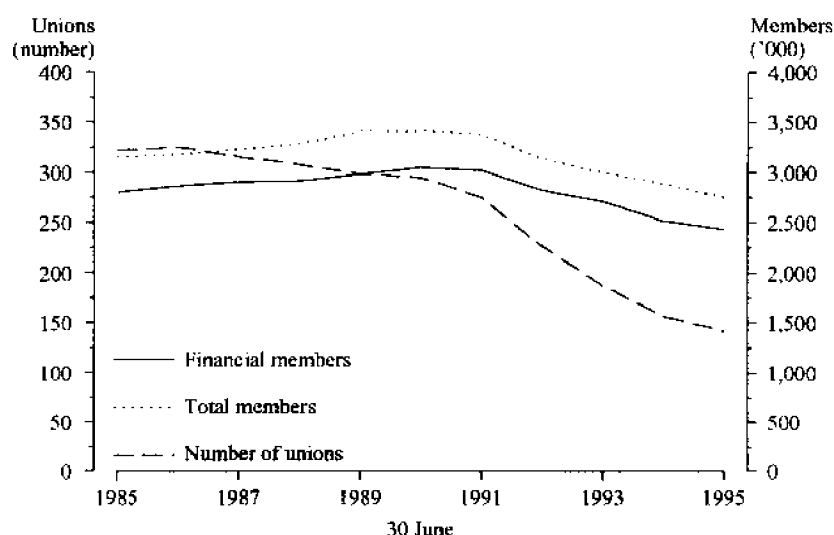
The number of trade unions has decreased by 15 since 1994, amalgamations being the main cause of the reduction in the number of unions. In the year to 30 June 1995, 15 unions amalgamated to form 7 unions.

Between 1985 and 1995 the number of individual unions decreased by 181, the majority of this decrease occurring since 1991.

Trade union membership declined by 133,900 (5%) in the year to 30 June 1995. This continues the trend of the decline in trade union membership since 1990. Between 1985 and 1990 the number of union members increased from 3,154,200 to 3,422,200.

The number of members reported declined in all States in the twelve months to June 1995 except in the Northern Territory where membership increased by 9 per cent.

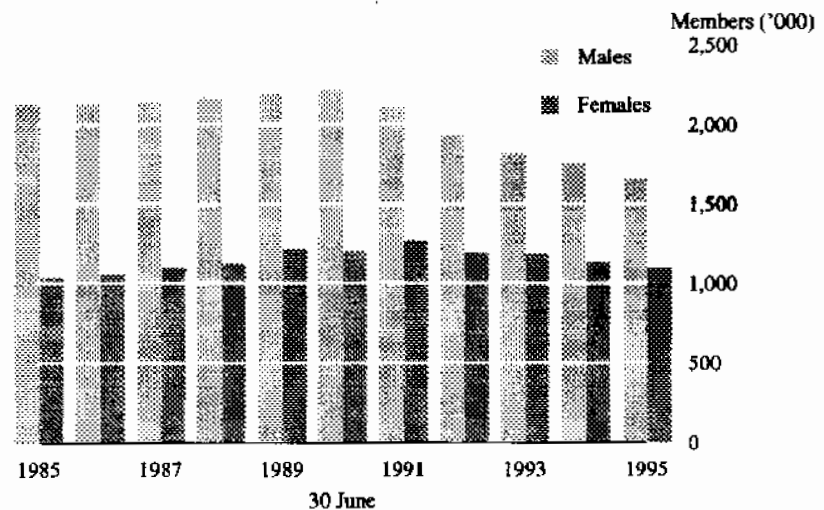
GRAPH 1. NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS, NUMBER OF FINANCIAL MEMBERS AND TOTAL MEMBERS, AUSTRALIA 30 JUNE 1985 TO 1995



Source: Table 1

Male membership of trade unions has decreased by 6 per cent since 1994 and by 25 per cent since the peak in 1990. Female membership of trade unions has decreased by 3 per cent since 1994 and by 13 per cent since the peak in 1991.

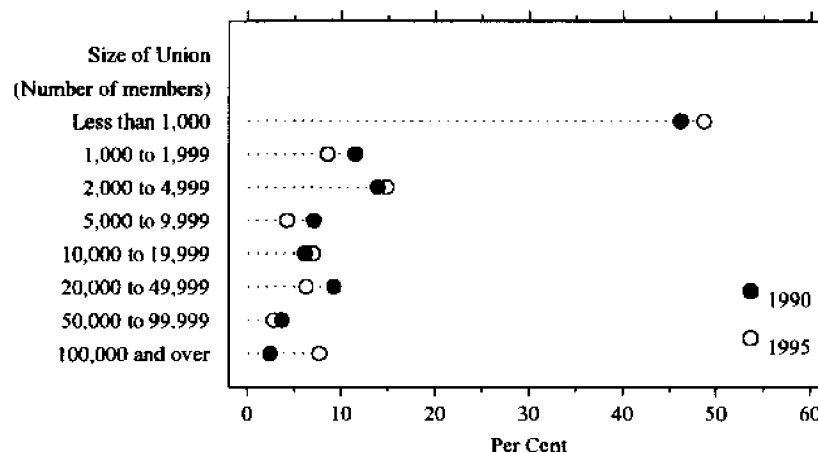
GRAPH 2. TRADE UNION MEMBERS, TOTAL MALE AND FEMALE, AUSTRALIA 30 JUNE 1985 TO 1995



Source: Table 1

Between 1994 and 1995 the number of large unions (with membership of 100,000 and over) decreased from 13 to 11, due to amalgamation and a reduction in membership numbers. The number of small unions (with less than 1,000 members) continued to decline from 76 in 1994 to 69 in 1995.

GRAPH 3. DISTRIBUTION OF TRADE UNIONS BY SIZE OF UNION, AUSTRALIA, 30 JUNE 1990 AND 1995

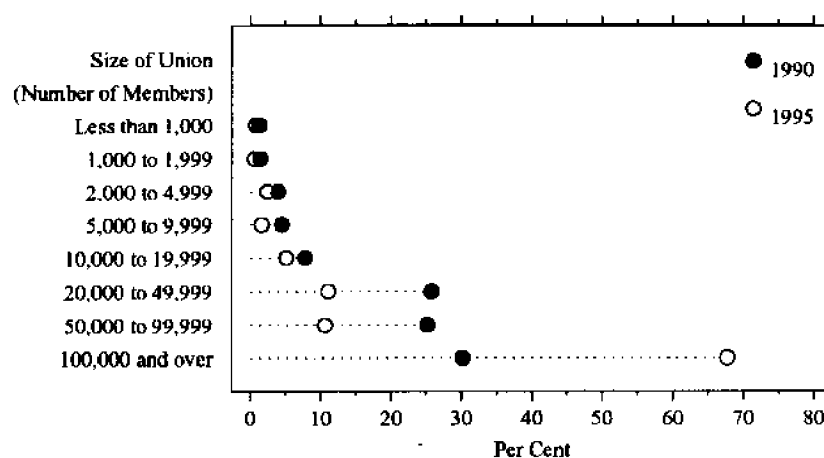


Source: Table 2

Since 1990, the number of members of large unions increased from 1,032,500 to 1,866,600 (81%). However, since 1994, there was a small decrease in large union membership of 4 per cent.

The number of members in small unions has decreased by 51 per cent since 1990.

GRAPH 4. DISTRIBUTION OF TRADE UNION MEMBERSHIP BY SIZE OF UNION, AUSTRALIA, 30 JUNE 1990 AND 1995



Source: Table 3

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- INQUIRIES
- . *for further information about statistics in this standard data service and the availability of related unpublished statistics*, contact Henry Ferst on Melbourne (03) 9615 7980 or any ABS State Office.
 - . *for information about other ABS statistics and services* please contact Information Service on Melbourne (03) 9615 7000 or any ABS State Office.

1 TRADE UNIONS: NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS

	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Aust. ¹
<i>As at 30 June</i>									
1990	163	157	126	131	134	121	57	62	295
1991	150	146	115	121	118	110	55	58	275
1992	124	114	94	95	95	91	46	54	227
1993	93	89	69	68	72	67	35	41	188
1994	81	71	57	56	59	54	27	30	157
1995	73	61	51	49	56	49	27	29	142

¹ Australian totals do not equal the sum of the States and Territories. See paragraph 3 of the Explanatory Notes.

2 TRADE UNIONS: NUMBER OF MEMBERS

	NSW ²	Vic.	Qld	SA '000	WA	Tas	NT	ACT ¹	Aust.
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MALES

<i>As at 30 June</i>									
1990 - Financial	664.7	532.6	280.2	173.4	167.5	58.1	9.7	30.2	1 916.3
<i>Total</i>	812.9	598.5	311.8	189.4	193.6	62.4	10.6	37.9	2 217.1
1991 - Financial	643.6	502.1	257.7	169.8	165.9	53.4	9.4	30.0	1 831.8
<i>Total</i>	762.5	573.5	300.5	186.8	186.9	59.3	11.7	34.3	2 115.5
1992 - Financial	573.4	464.1	239.5	157.4	160.3	51.5	8.2	27.7	1 682.1
<i>Total</i>	683.9	522.0	279.9	176.8	178.6	57.2	9.9	31.1	1 939.4
1993 - Financial	525.5	429.4	243.6	158.4	156.3	51.3	8.1	32.1	1 604.7
<i>Total</i>	614.0	482.4	273.1	174.6	167.1	55.6	9.2	36.5	1 812.6
1994 - Financial	497.1	375.6	231.5	143.5	124.2	45.4	8.3	30.5	1 456.1
<i>Total</i>	617.2	455.7	274.7	163.5	145.4	51.2	9.7	37.2	1 754.6
1995 - Financial	495.3	353.8	227.2	130.0	115.8	41.3	8.7	22.4	1 394.5
<i>Total</i>	596.4	420.8	266.0	150.8	138.5	47.1	9.8	26.9	1 656.4

FEMALES

<i>As at 30 June</i>									
1990 - Financial	406.3	307.4	155.2	112.1	94.5	33.1	7.4	20.7	1 136.7
<i>Total</i>	450.5	316.7	161.3	114.8	98.3	33.3	7.9	22.3	1 205.2
1991 - Financial	423.9	325.7	171.0	114.2	96.6	35.3	7.9	21.6	1 196.2
<i>Total</i>	454.6	338.5	183.8	119.2	103.0	36.3	8.8	22.8	1 267.0
1992 - Financial	411.7	291.0	162.5	114.6	96.2	35.9	7.2	21.5	1 140.5
<i>Total</i>	428.4	305.0	175.2	120.4	99.1	36.9	7.9	22.7	1 195.7
1993 - Financial	396.3	265.8	169.5	112.7	98.9	37.1	7.5	22.8	1 110.5
<i>Total</i>	423.6	288.2	183.4	119.3	102.8	38.4	8.1	23.8	1 187.5
1994 - Financial	389.8	253.2	171.3	107.2	81.3	34.9	7.5	22.6	1 067.8
<i>Total</i>	416.5	268.9	182.8	115.9	84.2	35.8	7.8	23.7	1 135.6
1995 - Financial	385.1	234.6	176.1	100.5	83.8	34.9	9.0	21.2	1 045.2
<i>Total</i>	405.2	248.8	185.5	106.9	86.4	36.3	9.2	21.6	1 099.9

PERSONS

<i>As at 30 June</i>									
1990 - Financial	1 071.1	840.0	435.3	285.4	262.2	91.2	17.1	50.9	3 053.2
<i>Total</i>	1 263.5	915.2	473.1	304.3	291.9	95.7	18.4	60.2	3 422.2
1991 - Financial	1 067.4	827.8	428.7	284.0	262.5	88.6	17.3	51.6	3 027.9
<i>Total</i>	1 217.1	912.0	484.3	306.0	289.9	95.6	20.5	57.1	3 382.6
1992 - Financial	985.1	755.0	402.0	272.0	256.4	87.4	15.5	49.2	2 822.6
<i>Total</i>	1 112.3	827.0	455.2	297.2	277.7	94.1	17.8	53.7	3 135.1
1993 - Financial	921.8	695.2	413.1	271.1	255.2	88.3	15.6	55.0	2 715.2
<i>Total</i>	1 037.5	770.6	456.5	294.0	269.9	94.0	17.3	60.3	3 000.1
1994 - Financial	886.8	628.8	402.8	250.8	205.5	80.3	15.8	53.2	2 524.0
<i>Total</i>	1 033.8	724.5	457.4	279.4	229.6	87.0	17.5	60.9	2 890.2
1995 - Financial	880.4	588.4	403.3	230.4	199.6	76.2	17.8	43.6	2 439.7
<i>Total</i>	1 001.6	669.7	451.5	257.6	224.9	83.4	19.1	48.5	2 756.3

¹ Due to changes in union structures some members formerly recorded in New South Wales prior to 1993 are now included in the Australian Capital Territory. See paragraph 10 of the Explanatory Notes.

3 TRADE UNION MEMBERS: PROPORTION OF TOTAL EMPLOYEES¹

	NSW ²	Vic.	Qld	SA %	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT ²	Aust.
MALES									
<i>As at 30 June</i>									
1990 - Financial	52	54	46	56	49	61	24	43	51
Total	64	60	51	61	56	65	26	54	59
1991 - Financial	51	55	43	59	49	58	22	45	51
Total	61	62	50	65	55	64	27	51	59
1992 - Financial	47	52	40	57	47	58	20	40	47
Total	56	58	47	64	52	65	25	44	55
1993 - Financial	44	48	39	57	44	59	21	45	46
Total	52	54	44	63	47	64	24	51	51
1994 - Financial	40	41	36	50	34	52	22	42	40
Total	49	50	42	57	40	58	26	51	48
1995 - Financial	38	37	33	45	31	46	23	30	37
Total	46	44	39	52	37	53	26	36	44
FEMALES									
<i>As at 30 June</i>									
1990 - Financial	43	40	34	48	36	48	26	34	40
Total	47	41	36	49	38	48	28	37	43
1991 - Financial	44	43	37	50	37	50	25	37	42
Total	47	45	40	52	39	51	28	39	45
1992 - Financial	43	41	34	51	37	51	23	35	41
Total	45	42	37	53	38	53	25	37	43
1993 - Financial	41	37	36	49	38	55	24	35	40
Total	44	40	39	52	39	57	26	36	42
1994 - Financial	40	34	34	45	29	51	25	35	37
Total	42	36	36	49	30	53	26	36	39
1995 - Financial	37	30	32	41	28	48	27	31	34
Total	38	31	34	43	29	50	28	32	35
PERSONS									
<i>As at 30 June</i>									
1990 - Financial	48	48	41	53	43	55	25	39	46
Total	57	52	45	56	48	58	27	46	52
1991 - Financial	48	50	40	55	43	54	23	41	47
Total	55	55	46	59	48	58	27	45	53
1992 - Financial	45	47	37	54	43	55	22	38	44
Total	51	51	42	59	46	59	25	41	49
1993 - Financial	43	43	38	53	41	57	22	40	43
Total	48	48	42	58	44	61	25	44	47
1994 - Financial	40	38	35	48	32	51	23	38	38
Total	46	44	39	53	36	56	26	44	44
1995 - Financial	37	34	33	43	30	47	25	31	35
Total	43	38	37	48	34	52	27	34	40

¹ Estimates of total employees used in calculating the proportion of trade union members to total employees have been derived from the ABS Labour Force Survey. See paragraph 8 of the Explanatory Notes.

² Due to changes in union structures some members formerly recorded in New South Wales prior to 1993 are now included in the Australian Capital Territory. See paragraph 10 of the Explanatory Notes.

4 TRADE UNIONS: NUMBER OF STATES AND/OR TERRITORIES OF OPERATION, AUSTRALIA

	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six or more	Total all States
NUMBER OF SEPARATE UNIONS							
As at 30 June							
1990	168	5	5	12	16	89	295
1991	156	9	3	16	12	79	275
1992	134	5	3	9	13	63	227
1993	122	5	2	5	8	46	188
1994	104	3	2	3	7	38	157
1995	94	4	n.p.	n.p.	5	35	142
NUMBER OF MEMBERS							
	'000						
As at 30 June							
1990	545.3	18.2	46.3	133.9	127.4	2 551.1	3 422.2
1991	578.6	22.9	4.6	140.5	132.2	2 503.9	3 382.6
1992	466.1	13.6	4.4	68.1	135.0	2 447.9	3 135.1
1993	488.7	12.2	9.2	21.5	73.5	2 395.1	3 000.1
1994	438.8	7.3	3.8	10.4	18.3	2 411.6	2 890.2
1995	420.3	16.0	n.p.	n.p.	14.7	2 294.8	2 756.3

5 TRADE UNIONS: NUMBER OF UNIONS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF UNION, AUSTRALIA

Size of Union (number of members)	Number of unions				As at 30 June 1995		
	As at 30 June 1991	As at 30 June 1992	As at 30 June 1993	As at 30 June 1994	Number of unions	Per cent of total unions	Cumulative per cent of total unions
Under 100	35	32	29	26	22	15.5	15.5
100 and under 250	34	26	20	21	14	9.9	25.4
250 and under 500	17	18	14	10	16	11.3	36.6
500 and under 1 000	38	28	26	19	17	12.0	48.6
1 000 and under 2 000	31	21	18	15	12	8.5	57.0
2 000 and under 3 000	13	14	11	11	11	7.7	64.8
3 000 and under 5 000	24	16	15	7	10	7.0	71.8
5 000 and under 10 000	18	19	14	11	6	4.2	76.1
10 000 and under 20 000	21	15	8	9	10	7.0	83.1
20 000 and under 30 000	11	7	5	4	3	2.1	85.2
30 000 and under 40 000	8	6	3	4	5	3.5	88.7
40 000 and under 50 000	6	5	4	3	1	0.7	89.4
50 000 and under 100 000	12	12	12	4	4	2.8	92.3
100 000 and over	7	8	9	13	11	7.7	100.0
Total	275	227	188	157	142	100.0	

6 TRADE UNIONS: NUMBER OF MEMBERS ACCORDING TO SIZE OF UNION, AUSTRALIA

Size of Union (number of members)	Number of members ('000)					As at 30 June 1995		
	As at 30 June 1991	As at 30 June 1992	As at 30 June 1993	As at 30 June 1994	As at 30 June 1995	Average number of members per union	Per cent of total members	Cumulative per cent of total members
Under 100	1.5	1.3	1.2	1.0	0.8	38	-	-
100 and under 250	5.5	4.1	2.9	3.6	2.5	175	0.1	0.1
250 and under 500	5.7	6.2	4.4	3.7	5.8	361	0.2	0.3
500 and under 1 000	26.2	19.8	18.7	13.4	13.1	768	0.5	0.8
1 000 and under 2 000	41.6	26.6	24.2	20.0	16.6	1 383	0.6	1.4
2 000 and under 3 000	31.8	35.2	26.7	27.7	26.8	2 434	1.0	2.4
3 000 and under 5 000	92.7	60.2	58.6	28.3	40.7	4 068	1.5	3.9
5 000 and under 10 000	124.5	123.9	95.3	75.3	44.5	7 410	1.6	5.5
10 000 and under 20 000	293.3	212.2	106.2	124.9	142.7	14 265	5.2	10.6
20 000 and under 30 000	278.1	170.9	115.2	89.4	75.8	25 283	2.8	13.4
30 000 and under 40 000	264.1	210.5	108.2	143.8	182.5	36 499	6.6	20.0
40 000 and under 50 000	268.2	220.2	168.4	127.3	46.6	46 606	1.7	21.7
50 000 and under 100 000	960.9	964.8	882.8	283.8	291.5	72 875	10.6	32.3
100 000 and over	988.6	1 079.2	1 387.1	1 948.0	1 866.6	169 692	67.7	100.0
Total	3 382.6	3 135.1	3 000.1	2 890.2	2 756.3	19 411	100.0	

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

The statistics in this standard data service has been compiled from questionnaires completed by individual trade unions and employee associations in respect of their membership and State of operation as at 30 June 1995. The collection was changed to an end of June basis in 1985. Figures for previous years were collected as at 31 December.

Scope and coverage

2 Current lists of trade unions are maintained by reference to the following sources:

- Trade unions registered under the provisions of the various Federal and State industrial relations Acts, trade union Acts, etc.
- unions reported to be engaged in conciliation and arbitration proceedings.
- reports in trade journals, trade union and employer periodicals, newspapers and other publications.

It should be noted that not all reporting trade unions are registered under industrial relations legislation or State trade union Acts.

3 To reduce the possibility of duplication of the number of unions and members in these statistics, where a trade union is a branch of a larger trade union, only the larger organisation is counted. An interstate or federated trade union (i.e. a union with members in more than one State or Territory) is treated as a separate union in each State or Territory in which it has members, but is counted only once in the Australian total. Unions with interstate associations which are not strictly branches of a common organisation are counted as separate unions in the totals for Australia.

4 The published number of trade unions varies from year to year as a result of amalgamations of unions, deregistration of unions, unions ceasing to operate, new unions being formed, existing organisations changing their status such that it brings them within the scope of the definition of a trade union (see paragraph 5), and unions reporting for the first time.

Definitions

5 For the purpose of these statistics a *trade union* is defined as an organisation, consisting predominantly of employees, the principal activities of which include the negotiation of rates of pay and conditions of employment for its members. Non-operating unions or branches, i.e. those with no members at the date of collection, are not included in the statistics.

6 *Membership of trade unions.* Financial members are dues paying members no more than 6 months in arrears. The total number of members includes all persons (financial, unfinancial, honorary, suspended, junior, etc.) regarded by unions as members.

7 Persons who are members of more than one union cannot be separately identified and are therefore counted more than once in the totals. The extent of this duplication is not known. Members of unions who work overseas are excluded from the reported membership data. Membership figures may be affected by differences in the concept of membership adopted by different unions or by the same union at different times (see paragraph 9 below).

8 *Proportion of total employees.* The approximate percentages of wage and salary earners in employment (i.e. employees) who were members of trade unions are shown in Table 3. From the 30 June 1995 edition of this standard data service, the proportions of employees have been calculated back to 30 June 1990 using estimates of employees taken from the ABS Labour Force Survey only. Prior to the 30 June 1994 edition, estimates of employees were taken predominantly from the ABS Survey of Employment and Earnings (*Employed Wage and Salary Earners* (6248.0)). The percentages shown should be regarded as giving only a broad indication of the extent of union membership among employees because they are based on estimates of

employed wage and salary earners; the number of union members who were not employed (i.e. were unemployed, retired, etc.) will affect the percentages for a particular year and comparisons over time.

Comparability of series

9 Comparability of figures for different years may be affected by a number of factors. As stated in paragraph 7, there may be duplication in the count of members. This duplication may vary over time. Union rules on membership may follow different concepts and practices and this may be reflected in the level and fluctuations of the figures reported. Unions reported financial and total membership separately for the first time as at 30 June 1985. In previous years some unions confined their reported membership to 'financial' members whilst others included various other members. Individual unions may or may not include in their reported membership unemployed members, members who have retired from the labour force, disabled members, members with dues in arrears (who may be kept on union books for varying lengths of time), etc.

10 Membership of trade unions is shown separately for males and females for each State and Territory. The subdivision of total membership into males and females is not precise because some trade unions are unable to state the exact number of male and female members. The subdivision of total membership by States and Territories is also not precise because some unions in the Territories are affiliated with State organisations and their membership is reported under the heading of that State. For example, some unions in the Northern Territory are affiliated with unions registered in Queensland or in South Australia. In addition the record keeping practices of unions may vary over time and this will affect the division of membership by State and Territory.

Organisations registered under industrial relations legislation

11 Details of employee organisations registered under the *Federal Industrial Relations Act 1988* as at 30 June 1995, and comparisons for 1994, are as follows:

	1995	1994
Employee unions	51	52
Membership	2 361 400	2 454 000

1995 membership figures reflect 86 per cent of total reported trade union membership.

12 Industrial relations legislation in most States also provides for the registration of employee associations. Some employee associations are registered under more than one Act but these are counted only once in these statistics.

Comparison with Trade Union Members, Australia (6325.0)

13 Statistics on trade union membership obtained from a supplementary survey to the labour force survey have been published biennially in *Trade Union Members, Australia* (6325.0) and more recently in the 1993 edition of *Working Arrangements, Australia* (6342.0). The estimates from these surveys are lower than those obtained from this census for a number of reasons, including the following:

- (i) estimates from the *Trade Union Members* and *Working Arrangements* surveys relate only to trade union membership in the respondent's main job; a person who was a member of a trade union only by virtue of holding a second job was excluded;
- (ii) they relate only to trade union membership in one job, whereas a person who had recently changed jobs could be registered as a member of more than one union in the Trade Union Census;
- (iii) the estimates relate only to persons who were employees in their main job in the reference week: other persons (e.g. unemployed and those not in the labour force) are excluded even though they may have retained union membership in respect of some earlier employment;

(iv) some persons may elect to belong to more than one union, but would be counted only once in the supplementary surveys;

(v) some unions may encounter difficulties in maintaining up-to-date registers of members. Numbers reported in the Trade Union Census may therefore include persons who are no longer members.

Related publications

14 Users may also wish to refer to the following publications:

Industrial Disputes, Australia (6322.0) - discontinued

Industrial Disputes, Australia (6322.0.40.001) - Standard data service

Industrial Disputes, Australia (6321.0) - issued monthly

Labour Force, Australia, Preliminary (6202.0) - issued monthly

Labour Force, Australia (6203.0) - issued monthly

Employed Wage and Salary Earners, Australia (6248.0) - issued quarterly

Trade Union Members, Australia, August 1992 (6325.0) - discontinued

Working Arrangements, Australia, 1993 (6342.0) - discontinued

Award Rates of Pay Indexes, Australia (6312.0) - issued monthly

Users interested in obtaining information about statistics previously available from discontinued publications should call ABS Client Services on:

Toll free 1800 620 085 or Fax (06) 253 1404.

Unpublished statistics

15 In some cases, the ABS can also make available information which is not published.

This information may be made available in one or more of the following forms: microfiche, photocopy, floppy disc, computer printout, clerically-extracted tabulation. Generally, a charge is made for providing unpublished information. Inquiries regarding data availability and associated charges should be directed to Henry Ferst on (03) 9615 7980, or to Information Services in the nearest ABS office.

16 Current publications produced by the ABS are listed in the *Catalogue of Publications and Products, Australia* (1101.0). The ABS also issues, on Tuesdays and Fridays, a *Release Advice* (1105.0) which lists publications to be released in the next few days. The Catalogue and Release Advice are available from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

- nil or rounded to zero

17 Where estimates have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

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